



**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF VENTURA**

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800 SOUTH VICTORIA AVENUE, VENTURA, CALIFORNIA 93009

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March 19, 2019

Board of Supervisors
800 S. Victoria Ave.
Ventura, CA 93009

SUBJECT: Recommendation of Supervisor Bennett to Direct the Planning Division to
Revise The Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance to Enable Bee Keeping in
Residential Zones

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

Direct the Planning Division to revise The Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance to enable bee
keeping in residential zones.

DISCUSSION:

As our Board recently heard from the County Agricultural Commissioner, bees are
beneficial insects that perform the critical function of plant pollination which is essential
for the life cycle of most native, agricultural, and ornamental trees and plants. We
additionally heard that bee colonies and populations are in decline in California and
nationally, which could potentially threaten the future of plant life as we know it. Bees
also produce comestible and useful products including honey, pollen, and bee's wax.

Many older zoning ordinances prohibit keeping bee hives in residential zones, ours
included. Backyard bee keeping as a hobby has become increasingly popular, with
participants citing the support of bee populations and the production of fresh honey as
attributes. Many cities and counties have revised their zoning ordinances to allow
limited bee keeping with appropriate standards in residential zones. The City of Ojai's
beekeeping ordinance section is attached as an example. Ojai reports that no problems
have been reported from backyard bee keeping, and a literature search indicates that
this is generally the case nationally. Backyard bee keeping would be particularly in
keeping with the rural, agricultural nature of the County unincorporated area.

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Conversations with the County Planning Director indicate that this minor Zoning Ordinance amendment could likely be combined with other pending amendments that will be brought forward to the Planning Commission and Board later this year with minimal workflow impact. I would respectfully encourage approval of the recommended action.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Steve Bennett". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Steve Bennett,
Supervisor, First District

Attachment: Ojai Beekeeping Ordinance